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FILE: PA98-0192

DATE: April 19, 2000

TO: City of Rancho Santa Margarita/File/Record/Applicant

FROM: Thomas B. Mathews, Director, Planning and Development Services Department

SUBJECT: Planning Application PA00-0003 – an administrative Site Plan for Rancho Santa Margarita Ford automobile dealership to facilitate a second story addition to the existing detail and wash bay area, expansion of vehicle display area with one additional display podium, and an additional on site inventory storage and employee parking area.

APPLICANT: Rancho Santa Margarita Ford, James F. Graham – Property Owner

Whitfield Associates, Gary Whitfield – Authorized Agent

I. NATURE OF PROJECT:

The subject property includes approximately 11.72 acres, lots 1, 2, and A-C of Tract 15219, within the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. The site is generally located northwest of the intersection of Santa Margarita Parkway and the Foothill Transportation Corridor at 30031 Santa Margarita Parkway in the Rancho Santa Margarita Planned Community, Business Park District. The existing dealership encompasses approximately 9.664 acres and includes approximately 47,326 square feet of gross building area in support of Rancho Santa Margarita Ford sales and service operations and was approved as a part of the Rancho Santa Margarita Auto Center, PA95-0118. The proposed project consists of: 1) the construction of a 3,906 sq. ft. second story addition over existing detail areas and wash bay area to create additional sales office space, a customer lounge, and a staff meeting area; 2) a ground level 466 sq. ft. service office addition within the service area; 3) an expansion of new vehicle display area adjacent to Santa Margarita Parkway within an adjacent parcel east of the dealership; and, 4) additional employee parking and new inventory storage behind the water district pump station adjacent to the dealership. The additional building area includes 3,906 square feet on the second level and is located at the northwest corner of the existing dealership building and 466 sq. ft. for the service office which is within the enclosed service area on the ground level. The new vehicle display area includes approximately 72,440 square feet of paved area. The additional building area will provide more convenient office and ancillary space for the existing employees and dealership operations.

The subject property is within Planning Area 79 (Business Park) of the Rancho Santa Margarita Planned Community and is regulated by the City of Rancho Santa Margarita. The project site is a portion of the Rancho Santa Margarita Auto Center approved in 1995 under Planning Application PA95-0118. The existing Ford Dealership was approved as Phase 1 of the master plan for the auto center. That planning application includes approximately 35 acres for auto sales and auto service commercial uses. To date only phase 1, Rancho Santa Margarita Ford, has been established.

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Surrounding uses include an Edison sub-station, Rancho Santa Margarita Water District pump station, office buildings, open space, the Foothill Transportation Corridor, and future automobile dealerships. The primary project site has been constructed and the proposed vehicle display area has been mass graded. There is a recorded 15-foot wide scenic preservation easement that encumbers the rear 15 feet of the entire site. That recorded easement diminishes to 12 feet 6 inches behind the Santa Margarita Pump Station. The proposed site plan and landscape plan reflects the easement and the proposed landscape treatment is consistent with the master plan to provide screening for the residences across the Arroyo.

The proposed 3,906 sq. ft. building addition is a second story addition and will be located at the rear of the existing dealership building. Therefore, there is no change to the setback from Santa Margarita Parkway. The addition is 194 feet from the west property line (common with future adjacent auto center uses to the west), and 72 feet from the rear property line. The west setback dimension for the addition is greater than the existing approved setback for other portions of the dealership buildings. Additionally, the rear setback is not changed from the existing structure setback due to the proposed addition to the second level. The architectural design of the addition is consistent with the design implemented for the existing dealership buildings. The design incorporates a stucco exterior finish and tile roof to match the existing. The addition is accented by matching wood corbels and ornamental metal grate windows that exist throughout the dealership. The small service office addition is enclosed within a niche inside the service area of the dealership. It is anticipated that the service office addition will be constructed after the larger second floor addition has been completed. Therefore, the project is in compliance with the existing building design and setback requirements of the Auto Center Master Site Plan, PA95-0118, and the planned community (PC) district regulations.

The new auto display area is noted in the Auto Center Master Plan as Pad 11. Under the master plan, Pad 11 was approved as conceptual only and the square footage of Pad 11 is not included within the total square footage approved for the auto center. Therefore, the additional display area does not affect the total building square footage allocated for the entire auto center. The new display area is 1.5 acres and will be an extension of the existing display area currently fronting the dealership, including landscape treatment and site lighting design. The new display area also includes one (1) new display podium identical to the other three display podiums that front Santa Margarita Parkway.

The third element of the application is an additional inventory storage area located behind the Southern California Edison substation and water district pump station. In addition to inventory storage, a limited number of employee parking stalls will be provided, 26 stalls. The access drive aisle to this area is 20 feet wide. The area will be screened by a continuation of the landscaping along the rear boundary of the site within the scenic preservation landscape easement area. An additional landscape screen will be provided adjacent to the Transportation Corridor boundary that will include shrub and tree landscaping with a minimum width of ten (10) feet that flares to approximately 22 feet in width. The additional inventory storage area will not be visible from Santa Margarita Parkway due to the existing substation and pump station facilities.

Off-street parking calculations are based upon the requirements as set forth in the Orange County Zoning Code, Section 7-9-145. Automobile sales and service facilities are required to provide parking at a ratio of 1 space for every 400 square feet of gross floor area. With the proposed minor building addition, the project proposes a total of 51,698 square feet of gross floor area. Thus, requiring 129 off-street parking stalls. The project provides 134 off-street parking spaces, meeting the minimum required off-street parking code requirement as set forth in Section 7-9-145 of the Orange County

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Zoning Code. Customer parking stalls are provided adjacent to the primary entrance to the facility and near the customer service entrance. Employee vehicle parking is located behind the facility adjacent to the rear access drive and within a portion of the new vehicle inventory area behind the substation facilities. In addition to the 134 spaces noted above, there are approximately 67 parking spaces within the service area that is used to store customer vehicles that have been serviced and are waiting for pick-up by the owners.

Access to the site is provided via two access driveways. There is one from Santa Margarita Parkway at the west end of the dealership and a secondary driveway at the east end of the dealership. The east driveway also serves as the access easement serving the Edison sub-station and the water district facility. This driveway will not provide any customer access to the dealership but will serve as the egress for the delivery trucks after dropping off the newly delivered vehicle inventory to the site. The west driveway currently serves only the Ford dealership; however, in the future it will serve as a shared primary access to the future adjacent dealership to the west.

Proposed landscaping adjacent to Santa Margarita Parkway in front of the new car display area is a continuation of the existing landscape plan that currently exists for the streetscape of the dealership. The proposed landscaping at the rear of the project site includes the continuation of the landscape treatment within the scenic preservation easement area to provide the buffer between the dealership development and O'Neill Regional Park and screening for residences across the Arroyo. The proposed landscaping continues the theme that was approved for the master auto center plan. Although specific details of the proposed lighting for the expanded dealership are not included within this permit application, the lighting scheme design and lighting restrictions imposed as a part of the master auto center plan will be continued for the expanded areas of this permit. The master site plan conditions of approval, specifically, lighting and landscaping conditions are carried forward and are applicable as conditions of approval for this application which will require a revised final landscape plan to be submitted for final review and approval prior to issuance of building permits.

Additional signage is not a part of this application and therefore is not considered. Any additional signage for the project site is subject to the requirements of Section XXI of the Rancho Santa Margarita Planned Community Text and/or the master sign program for the auto center.

The existing conditions of approval of the Master Site Development Permit PA95-0118 apply to the proposed increased areas of the project site. Those existing conditions of approval are incorporated by reference within the conditions of approval of this permit, and shall be applied as applicable.

II. REFERENCE: (Authority for Administrative action is given by what ordinance, regulation, etc.)

Master Site Development Permit PA95-0118 for the Rancho Santa Margarita Auto Center, the Orange County Zoning Code Section 7-9-150 "Discretionary Permits and Procedures" and Section XV (Business Park Site Development Standards) of the Rancho Santa Margarita Planned Community Development Plan and Supplemental Text. This may only be executed with concurrence approval from the City of Rancho Santa Margarita staff.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION:

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The proposed project is covered by Final EIR NO. 320, previously certified on September 22, 1982 and Addendum PA9950118. Prior to project approval, the decision-maker must assert that together they are adequate to satisfy the requirements of CEQA for the proposed project. Appendix A of this report contains the required CEQA Finding.

IV. CERTIFICATION:

I hereby certify that the subject proposal has been reviewed and has been found to be consistent with the Rancho Santa Margarita Planned Community Text regulations and is recommended for Conditional Approval.

Thomas B. Mathews, Director
Planning and Development Services Department

Date: _____

By: _____
C. M. Shoemaker, Chief
CPSD/Site Planning Section

City of Rancho Santa Margarita Concurrence and Approval:

Date: _____

By: _____
George A. Wentz
Assistant City Manager, City of Rancho Santa
Margarita

CB FOLDER: pa00-0003.RSM.adm

APPEAL PROCEDURE

Any interested person may appeal the decision of the Director on this permit to the Orange County Planning Commission within 15 calendar days of the decision upon submittal of required documents and a filing fee of \$ 760.00 filed at the Development Processing Center, 300 N. Flower St., Santa Ana.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A - Findings

Appendix B - Conditions of Approval

EXHIBITS

1. Master Site Development Permit PA95-0118 Conditions of Approval

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2. Initial Study and Addendum PA00-0003